

**STATEMENT OF J. T. CARUSO
FBI DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION
October 11, 2001**

Good morning Mr. Chairman, Ms. Harman, and Members of the Subcommittee. I appeared before this Subcommittee last week to address inaccurate media reports surrounding the terrorist attacks of September 11th and their aftermath. Unfortunately, the past week has brought additional media reports of potential terrorist acts -- some of which are inaccurate -- which I would like to briefly address.

On October 3rd, at approximately 4:00 a.m., a Greyhound Bus crashed near Manchester, Tennessee after a passenger, Damir Igic, attempted to slash the throat of the driver. Igic and six other passengers were killed. Approximately 38 passengers were on board the bus at the time of crash, most of whom were sleeping.

The driver of the bus was approached by Igic two to three times and asked how much longer until the next stop. The driver advised Igic that they would be making a stop in Manchester, Tennessee and that he should go back to his seat. When Igic approached the driver for the last time, he did not say anything, but produced a sharp object and attempted to slash the driver's throat. Igic then grabbed the steering wheel causing the bus to crash.

Media attention to this event was intense, with suggestions of terrorist activity. A temporary nationwide shutdown of the Greyhound bus service was put into effect. The FBI's investigation into this event is continuing but there is nothing to suggest a connection between Igic and any terrorist organization. This appears to be an isolated,

random act of violence, unrelated to the events of September 11th.

Days later, a passenger onboard an American Airlines flight from Los Angeles to Chicago attempted to force his way into the cockpit. The pilot sent a distress call to the Federal Aviation Administration and two F-16 fighter jets were dispatched to intercept the airliner and escort it to Chicago O'Hare International Airport. The passenger did not possess any weapons and was subdued by the flight crew and passengers. As with the Greyhound bus, this incident appears to be an isolated act by a disturbed individual. The FBI has not been able to confirm any connections between the passenger who rushed the cockpit and any terrorist organization.

By far the most disturbing media reports are reports of the potential use by terrorists of the biological agent, Anthrax, in south Florida. At this time, the presence of Anthrax appears to be limited to the American Media building located in Boca Raton, Florida. The building, which has been evacuated and sealed, consists of three floors totaling 66,000 square feet. The building, inside and out -- including air conditioning ducts and soil -- is being painstakingly searched and swabbed for any microscopic presence of Anthrax spores.

At this time, the presence of Anthrax has been confirmed in a number of locations and testing continues. The presence of Anthrax has been confirmed, first, in the body of Robert Stevens, an employee of American Media who died last week of inhaled Anthrax; second, on the computer keyboard belonging to Mr. Stevens; in the building's mailroom; and in two other American Media employees who have had contact with the bacteria but have not developed the Anthrax disease. These two individuals

are being treated with antibiotics and are expected to make a full recovery.

The FBI is working diligently with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control, and state and local authorities to determine the source of the Anthrax in the American Media building. Although we do not yet have the complete picture, we do know several key elements. First, the Anthrax bacteria has not been discovered in unlikely places or unnatural states anywhere else in the country nor anywhere else within Palm Beach County. Second, each of the five instances within the American Media building appears to involve the same strain of Anthrax. It is important to emphasize that, despite media suggestions to the contrary, there is no evidence that the presence of Anthrax in the American Media building is a terrorist act. The FBI has found no connection between the Anthrax discovery in Florida and the terrorist attacks of September 11th. As with the crash of the Greyhound bus and the rush of the cockpit door, the presence of Anthrax bacteria appears to be an isolated incident.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to once again address this Subcommittee and dispel some of the misinformation currently being reported. In short, there is no need for the American people to panic. We are all on heightened alert and, understandably, react to any unusual occurrence in a way we may not have reacted prior to September 11th. All of our lives have changed in that sense.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to mention that yesterday, President Bush unveiled a new program which will enable us to capitalize on this heightened awareness. The newly designated "Most Wanted Terrorists" list is shining the spotlight

on the names and faces of terrorists who may be living, working, or hiding in darkened corners in remote locations overseas. By publicizing their names and faces, we hinder their efforts to run and to hide.

As Director Mueller has noted, a total of 467 dangerous criminals have been put under the watchful eye of the public since the introduction of the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" program in 1950. Of those 467 "most wanted fugitives," 438 have been captured, a success rate of nearly 94 percent. Of that number, nearly one in three have been apprehended through a tip from a private citizen. With yesterday's announcement by President Bush, we are once again combining the power and reach of the media with the eyes and ears of millions of concerned citizens around the world in the fight against terrorism.